# Paper Work LLNL Postdoc Association Newsletter October 12, 2011 • Volume 1, Issue 1



#### Welcome to Our New Newsletter

Welcome to the first issue of the Postdoc Association Newsletter! Our goals as an association are to foster a sense of community among the postdocs, advocate by advising the Postdoc Program on what support is needed, and provide information about how to acclimate to the Lab and the Bay Area.

With this newsletter, we're going to work towards those goals by regularly broadcasting news about what's going on, try to provide some useful information and finally, be highly interactive! This last part needs your input. Please let us know how we're doing, and if you think of anything that we should share with the community. Sincerely,



Nathan Kugland, Postdoc Association Vice President and Newsletter Editor



Food, Fire, and Professional Networking
Post-doc barbecue picnic brought PDs and family to Del Valle Regional Park on July 8th

By Andre Schleife

On Friday, July 8th 2011, the Lawrence Livermore Postdoc Association invited the Postdocs and their families to come together for our annual Barbeque in the beautiful setting of the Del Valle Park a few miles south of Livermore. With about 90 tickets sold, this years' event promised to be even bigger than the previous Postdoc Barbeque and, indeed, more people showed up than ever before to enjoy cool drinks, hot grilled food, and chill conversations with colleagues and friends in a relaxed atmosphere.

The event started out in the afternoon with the first people arriving around 4 pm in the park. Perfect weather helped set the mood, with warm sunshine, a nice breeze, and plentiful shade under lots of trees. Shortly after, the Barbeque was fueled and run by volunteering professionals—thanks for your help! With the picnic feeling established, everyone mingled and talked, joked and discussed, or just enjoyed a Friday afternoon in the Postdoc community. The hours flew by and by the time the clock hit nine, the last people helped clean up, not to leave the slightest trace of this event in the park.

Thanks to everyone for coming, for contributing delicious desserts and snacks, and for making this event such a nice opportunity to get to know your fellow Postdocs (and their families) at LLNL! We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did and we are looking forward to the future events that we will have together!

#### **Upcoming Events**

Lunch — Postdoc Social Event Thursday, October 13, 12:15 PM Lanna Thai Restaurant, 2270 Las Positas Rd, Livermore Hosted by Nathan Kugland

#### Physics & Life Sciences Postdoc Research Seminar

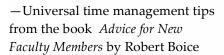
Tuesday, October 18, 2011, 11 AM 11 AM, B151 R1209 (Stevenson Room) Refreshments served "Model for CO2 Leakage Through a Fault with Multiphase and Non-isothermal Effects," Chuanhe Lu (AEED) "Nanosecond-scale in situ Study of Rapidly Driven Phase Transformations in Ge 2Sb2Te5," Melissa Santala (CMMD)

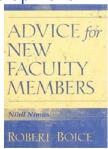
#### Livermore Corn Maze — Postdoc Social Event

Thursday 10/27 (2 days before Halloween!) 5:30 – 7 PM G&M Farms, 487 East Airway, Livermore <a href="www.gmfarms.com">www.gmfarms.com</a> See website for discount coupon

## Professional & Career Development

- Start before you feel ready and stop before you feel finished
- Increase productivity, creativity, and publishability through brief, daily sessions of focused and relaxed work.





### Next Steps: Interviews with Former Postdocs

Lars F. Voss recently converted from a postdoc to a staff member at LLNL. Prior to his conversion, he was the recipient this year of a labwide grant to work on "Super strained 3D Semiconductors."

Where do you work now and how is that similar or different from what you did as a Post-Doc?

I work in the Center for Micro and Nano Technology in the Engineering Technologies Division, which is the same as when I started my post doc.

Did you apply elsewhere? Why did you make this choice (Lab vs academia vs industry)?

I did not apply elsewhere prior to conversion.

What did you enjoy the most and the least about being a PD at LLNL? What do you think are the differences between a PD at the lab versus at a University? What I most enjoyed during my post doc was the opportunity to work with highly skilled people from diverse backgrounds. The multidisciplinary excellence is where I believe the lab shines and the opportunity to work intimately on a team of people from all disciplines is unique. In addition, my mentors have exceeded my expectations as far as giving me opportunities to grow and pursue new areas of research that weren't directly in

line with my existing expertise. As far as negatives, there are no glaring ones.

How far along your PD were you when you decided what the next step in your career would be?

I had previous experience at a national laboratory before I came to LLNL, so I had a hunch that this was the kind of environment I wanted to work in. Within the first six months of my post doc I felt comfortable with both my role and with the people I was working with to know that it was a good fit for me.

Can you describe the application and interview process? How did you get your new job? What do you think your employer valued the most in your formation and experience?

Because I work in the same group on the same projects as when I started, I have nothing to say about this.

Any piece of advice for PDs at LLNL?

The most important thing I have learned about getting things done at the lab is to be proactive. If you need something, keep calling until it happens. And if there is a tool or capability you want to use, make sure to tell people you are a postdoc. Everyone here always seems to want to help out postdocs!

#### Job Resources

#### Academic Keys <u>www.academickeys.com</u>

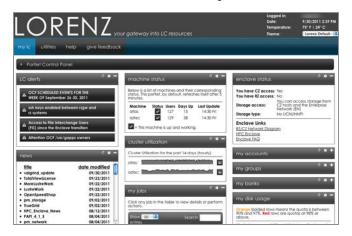
This is a major web site with postings for academic jobs such as professor, research scientist, and dean (who knows, maybe a bit later). This site was recommended to me by one of my former professors. Academic Keys has broad coverage of disciplines and geographic areas,

although the difficult reality of academic job scarcity is still on display. I tried a search for academic positions with "physics" as a keyword, and perhaps not surprisingly, most of the opportunities were for lower-profile colleges far from major cities.

-Nathan Kugland

## Did You Know...? Useful Tips

There's a new web interface to the Livermore Computing clusters. Just type "mylc" into your web browser, log in, and see your job status, system status, account info (accounts and banks) plus much more.



Have a tip that's worth sharing with the postdoc community? Send it to Cedric (<u>rochaleao1@llnl.gov</u>) and it might just be featured here!

#### In Other News: Ig Nobel Awards

From www.improbable.com/ig/winners/

LITERATURE PRIZE: John Perry of Stanford University, USA, for his Theory of Structured Procrastination, which says: To be a high achiever, always work on something important, using it as a way to avoid doing something that's even more important.

REFERENCE: "How to Procrastinate and Still Get Things Done," John Perry, Chronicle of Higher Education, February 23, 1996. Later republished elsewhere under the title "Structured Procrastination."

Visit Perry's website for several brilliant essays: www.structuredprocrastination.com

Essay titles include:

- Structured Procrastination
- A Plea for the Horizontally Organized
- The Case Against Golf

## Comments/Suggestions/Complaints? Your Participation is Welcome!

Is there something that this newsletter could do better? Do you observe something around the Lab that could be better? What do *you* want from your Postdoc Association? Let us know! Contact Nathan (<u>kugland1@llnl.gov</u>). We'll do our best to incorporate your advice or pass it along to the relevant decision makers.

Please let us know about your recent peer-reviewed publications as a postdoc. This is a good way to broadcast your achievements, make new connections, and also for us to have a measure of how well we are doing collectively. Having your work in the newsletter also gives you valuable exposure to LLNL group leaders and other managers who receive our newsletter and hire postdocs.

## Discovering the Bay! (and beyond...) Fun Activities Out & About

This section spotlights some of the fun and interesting things that are going on in our area. Your contributions are welcome.

#### Wicked Plants: Botanical Rogues & Assassins

April 7 - October 30, 2011

San Francisco Conservatory of Flowers, Golden Gate Park www.conservatoryofflowers.org

"Paralysis, strangulation, derangement – these are just a few of the misdeeds of the plant kingdom as chronicled by award-winning author Amy Stewart in her 2009 New York Times Bestseller, Wicked Plants: The Weed that Killed Lincoln's Mother & Other Botanical Atrocities. And now, something wicked this way comes. It's mayhem under glass, as the Conservatory of Flowers transforms its Special Exhibits Gallery into an eerie Victorian garden full of Mother Nature's most appalling creations."



## Minutes from the Postdoc Association Council Meeting on October 5th, 2011

12:15 – 1:00 PM, West Cafeteria. In attendance: Simms, Kugland, Wang, Stanton, Whitley, Rocha Leao, Nelson, Zachow, Schleife, Ndoye, Kulp, Howley.

All are welcome to attend future meetings. Announcement will be made on the postdoc@llnl.gov mailing list.

#### 1) Confirmation of Roles

- Lance Simms: President
- Nathan Kugland: VP & Newsletter Editor
- Cedric: newsletter team, event organizer, representative at the Institutional PD board, chairs the PLS seminars, involved with Foreign National related issues
- Andre: Newsletter team, event organizer
- Kirsten: Photographer, newsletter team
- Mandoye: Postdoc handbook manager
- 2) Obtaining a list of postdocs & welcoming new ones
  - Kris has this and will send us an updated version about once a month.
  - There are currently 204 postdocs
  - When Kris welcomes new PDs, she will attach the postdoc handbooks.

#### 3) Career Development Offsite

- Lot of good ideas including proposal writing, impact of working on classified projects, consulting possibilities for lab employees
- We are looking for suggestions for what people want to hear about, for example internal opportunities, academic positions, etc.
- 4) New Postdoc Newsletter
  - Everyone agreed that newsletter looks great. A preliminary copy was handed out to everyone.

- Lego block structure includes feature articles, upcoming events, professional & career development, postdoc interviews, classified ads, and more
- New edition every two weeks sent by email 5) FY12 Budget
  - Lance will start on proposal for FY12 budget once everyone has been given a chance to give input
  - Ideas and items so far include: 2012 BBQ, 2011 Holiday party, T-shirts for postdocs
- 6) Next Postdoc Social Events
  - Lunch (scheduled for 10/13)
  - Corn Maze in Livermore (10/27)
  - Event for postdocs with kids (TBD)

#### 7) Winter Holiday Party

- Must be after 1/1/12 if we are to use funds that we receive
- Sell tickets to either pay for some of it or to raise money for a charity
- Possible venues discussed were hotel banquet hall, golf course, vineyard in Livermore, cruise on the bay
- Try to have it in Pleasanton or the city so it is closer to those living outside Livermore
- Andre could possibly play with his band for musical entertainment

#### 8) Next Meeting

- Semi-regular meeting, 1st Wednesdays. Later in the west cafeteria so it is quieter or in central cafeteria or at a restaurant offsite.
- Conference rooms in 543 also possible.



## Meet the Postdoc Association Leadership Council Vice President & Newsletter Editor Nathan Kugland studies laboratory astrophysics

I work in NIF's High Energy Density Physics group, which is led by Bruce Remington. My job is to plan, carry out, and analyze the results of laser experiments that are designed to reproduce the micro-physics that is found throughout in the universe in collisionless shocks. It's an astrophysics project. We care because understanding these shocks might help explain cosmic ray acceleration and magnetic field generation. Before coming to LLNL as a postdoc I was a graduate student at UCLA but I performed my research here through the Lawrence Scholar program. What I like most about LLNL is the "center of knowledge" effect: there are true experts here in so many fields, and once I find them they are usually really happy to help me with my questions.

## LLNL Postdoc Association Leadership Council

President Lance Simms
Vice President Nathan Kugland
Handbook Editor Mandoye Ndoye
Newsletter Team

Nathan Kugland, Andre Schleife, Cedric Rocha-Leao, Kirsten Howley

Participating Councilmembers

Dietrich Dehlinger, Sarah Nelson, Liam Stanton, Ming Tang, Eric Wang, Heather Whitley

LLNL Postdoc Advisory Committee Staff Representatives

Kris Kulp, Christine Zachow